

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: John Yonenaga Arashiro, 84, retired waiter

*" . . . to be a waiter at the hotel, it's one thing much better earning. Not only that but much cleaner job with white (uniform), white cloth. And contact all the mostly high-tone people, all travelers. They are not poor people, all rich people."*

John Yonenaga Arashiro, one of ten children, was born in Haneji-son, Okinawa, in 1902. He arrived in the Islands in 1916. He worked at Kekaha plantation for two years before moving to Honolulu.

In Honolulu he improved upon the six years of schooling received in Okinawa. Supporting himself as a schoolboy, he studied at Trinity Mission School, 'Iolani School, and Hawai'i Mission Academy.

Prior to graduation, he quit school and worked at a Japanese-run restaurant. Later, he became a waiter at the Moana Hotel and the Royal Hawaiian.

In 1928 he began a thirty-six year career at Halekūlani. Starting as a waiter, he rose to captain of waiters in 1946.

Retired since 1964, he enjoys the company of his family in Mānoa, O'ahu.

Tape No. 13-89-1-86

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

John Yonenaga Arashiro (JA)

May 16, 1986

Mānoa, O'ahu

BY: Michi Kodama-Nishimoto (MK)

MK: This is an interview with Mr. John Yonenaga Arashiro at his home in Mānoa, O'ahu on May 16, 1986. The interviewer is Michi Kodama-Nishimoto.

Okay, then, for the first question that I have for you, Mr. Arashiro, is when were you born?

JA: I (was) born in 1902, March 26. Kūhiō Day is the same day.

MK: And where were you born?

JA: I (was) born in Okinawa. Haneji-son. And now, it became Nago City. It's included now.

MK: When you were small, how many brothers and sisters did you have?

JA: I have five brothers and five sisters.

MK: What number child are you?

JA: I'm the last boy (of) the five.

MK: You know, Haneji-son where you grew up, what kind of place was that?

JA: It's ordinary like a farmer's [village]. It's near the mountain. We have many fruits and strawberries. (They) all grew wild. We used to pick (them and) enjoy (eating). Very nice place.

MK: What kind of work did most of the people at Haneji-son do?

JA: They raise rice, sugar cane, wheat, and potatoes. But near the ocean, they used to go fishing.

MK: What did your family do for a living?

JA: Mostly farm sugar cane, rice, potato, (and) vegetables.

MK: Can you explain to me how it is that you came to Hawai'i?

JA: That's right after the Japan and Russia fight [i.e., Russo-Japanese War] ended in Meiji san-ju-kunen [i.e., thirty-ninth year of the Meiji period]. San-ju-kunen, that's if you [change] back to American dates, it's 1906, or something like that. And when it was that, my elder brother, right after he came from the battlefield, he hear so much about Hawai'i, he included in the immigration. And then, soon after he [had] enough money to call brothers and sisters, and that's why we [came to Hawai'i]. . . . He call my father first. And then, the father call three brothers, and then his wife. Then mostly we landed on Kekaha, Kaua'i. That's 1916.

MK: When you first landed in Kekaha, Kaua'i, what did you think about Hawai'i?

JA: Well, I (heard) many things about Hawai'i. First thing, they said, it's rice from morning to lunch and dinner. In Okinawa, we didn't have rice unless we got sick. Only sick men given rice. The rest all eat potato and so on. So, that's why we thought (Hawai'i) was a good place. And sure enough, I had good food every time. But the work was quite hard.

MK: What kind of work did you do at Kekaha?

JA: First, I (cut grass). And then, (because) I was small, the foreman arrange (for) me to (be the) water boy. So, I used to take water from the beach and (take it to the) workers. But soon after, about one year later. . . . My brother was doing contract (work) on a cane field. So, I join him. So, that's where I got the same wages (like other) adults. But I went to night school, too.

MK: When you were living in Kekaha, what kind of camp were you living in?

JA: Well, (there were) at least about thirty families. We got up about five o'clock, and then we start (work from) six o'clock [a.m.] to five o'clock [p.m.]. But when (we) do contract (work), we work more (hours). (The) other people get twenty dollars for twenty-one days. We (get) twenty-two dollars.

MK: When you did the contract work, what kind of work did you actually do?

JA: Well, we raise (many acres of) sugar cane. And then, we pay the (people we hire to do the work. After we paid all of our expenses, we still made some profit.)

MK: At Kekaha, you mentioned to me that you went to school. What kind of schooling did you have in Kekaha?

JA: Oh, that's night school. [The teacher] came very early and educated in Okinawa before he came here. He was very good teaching

us ABC's. Starting ABC and many other reading, about first-grade, second-grade, third-grade books. That's very helpful.

MK: Who was the teacher at Kekaha?

JA: Well, he passed away, but Mr. Gibo. Gibo-san. He was not working in the sugar (cane field)---he was so educated, he work in the store as a bookkeeper, like that. So, at nighttime, he used to teach us.

MK: The last time we met, you mentioned that you also attended Waimea School. When was that?

JA: The place we stay, we call Marian Camp. It's almost, near to Waimea. When we get that shortcut go inside there, much easier. So, we used to go Waimea (School) instead of Kekaha. Because it's much (nearer).

MK: At Waimea School, what did you learn?

JA: Well, the teacher (taught) us ABC mostly by singing. That's why, it's very easy for me since I like singing. When she sing, so pretty and so, instead of eye, I learn with my ear. And especially in the mathematics, like that. (JA sings:) One and one are two, two and two are four, three and three are six, four and four are eight. That song is really quite easy. Pronouncing the word, it was very good. But as the days go on, the subject, they don't have any reader or something like that. They did have, but it was very simple one. Another [student] came (from Japan). [He] is about one year younger. [So] we had two big boys. So, we were learning, but I thought was kind of foolish. So I quit. I went to the night school.

MK: After that, after night school and staying in Kekaha, you came to Honolulu.

JA: That's right.

MK: When did you come to Honolulu?

JA: I came here 1921.

MK: Why did you come to Honolulu?

JA: Because my brother was doing the contract, and I completed two contract[s] with sugar cane. I thought I help him enough, so I thought it's good time before I get too old to go school. We can attend public school in Kekaha, we could but still yet, I thought much easier if we come to Honolulu. Because (one of) my brother[s] was staying already in Honolulu. So I came to Honolulu, doing schoolboy at the same time, and do the schoolboy job all around.

MK: So, who did you do the schoolboy job for in Honolulu?

JA: At first one was Mr. Dickens. He's treasurer at [Honolulu] Advertiser. When I hear him, he was getting about sixty-five dollars [weekly], oh, we were so surprised. I getting only four dollars a week. And then, he get sixty dollars, something like that. I mean, weekly. That's quite a difference.

MK: How did you get the schoolboy job?

JA: Well, in the early school (days), first we went (to) Trinity Mission Academy. The people who want a schoolboy, they put (ad) inside there. They order. So from there, we go for schoolboy.

MK: What was your job as a schoolboy?

JA: Yard boy, do the yard boy. And vegetable farming. And then, nighttime, I do the washing dishes. Except Sunday. Sunday, we just do morning time job. And afternoon, we get off freed.

MK: When you're a schoolboy, how much do you get paid?

JA: That was about four dollars, weekly.

MK: How about your living arrangement?

JA: That was not good enough. So, when summer come, we used to go (to) Hawaiian Pine[apple] Company (and) work over there.

MK: What kind of work did you do at Hawaiian Pine?

JA: I used to do the picking empty can. I did about seven years, (or) seven summers, I used to work there. That way, we save enough money to buy clothes, and then books. That four dollars is not enough for tuition for school, like that, too. So, we had to go work summertime (anyway).

MK: Then, you mentioned you went to 'Iolani?

JA: No, first, Trinity Mission Academy.

MK: Trinity Mission Academy.

JA: From there, after fourth grade, (I went to) 'Iolani School. I stay until fifth grade. And then, from there, I transfer to Hawaiian Mission Academy.

MK: Why did you transfer to Hawaii[an] Mission?

JA: No, I had some hard time on paying the tuition. Quite big, over there. It's much higher than Hawaiian Mission Academy.

MK: When you look back on your school years and at Trinity Mission and at 'Iolani, what do you think about the schooling you got there?

JA: Almost the same. But still yet, in Hawaiian Mission Academy, many Chinese and Japanese, all people like that came together. Some of my friends, they say it's good. So, I transfer there.

MK: To what grade did you go up to at Hawaii[an] Mission Academy?

JA: I went to (as far as) sophomore, halfway only. Only about couple of months only. Why, because I didn't take algebra (before). Algebra is very hard there. So, that's the reason I couldn't continue.

You know, when I was attending Hawaiian Mission Academy, I worked for Mr. Dunstan. Captain Dunstan was a army captain. Every morning when school time, he has a chauffeur. (Army) sergeant, oh, every morning, (he) pick (us) up, and he go to Fort Shafter, you see. On the way, instead I go on the bus, he used to deliver me there to Hawaiian Mission Academy. It's quite interesting, you know, when he command the driver. Say, "To the right, to the left, to the right, to the left." When I (heard) his words like that, it's very interesting. When I arrive at the school, all the (students) look at us, you know. (They) think I'm a big shot. No, I'm not big shot.

(Laughter)

JA: I had a good time back then.

MK: What kind of work did you do for Captain Dunstan?

JA: Of course, I did yard job, room cleaning, and then trimming the hedges, like that. And then, nighttime, I used to wash, dish washing.

MK: The other time we met, you were telling the story of why you left Hawaii[an] Mission Academy. Can you tell me why you left the academy?

JA: Well, I had an argument with the principal, Mr. Giddings, as we call it. He used to teach English language. That time, about 1923, like that, the picture bride immigration, it was stopped. I complained to him that why should they stop this picture bride? What the Asian people like us, what going happen? I had a quarrel with him. I ask him to help. He said no, he can't do that. So, I quit.

MK: Oh, that's why. And so, you quit school. And when you quit school, did you also stop being the schoolboy for Captain Dunstan?

JA: I work in a restaurant. Because I went a restaurant to (be) waiter. I was training, waiting on Captain Dunstan when I doing the schoolboy time. So, (because of) that, I know how to wait on people, like that. That's why I went to (be a) waiter.



MK: What was the name of the Japanese restaurant that you worked at?

JA: That's funny, no? That Independence (Grill) Restaurant. It's managed by two Japanese. It was very good. But before that, I had more smaller restaurant. The owner was Yasuda. He doesn't write any English. So I was writing his menu every time. And I do the dish washing, and writing the menu, and same time, I was doing the cashier, too. From there, (after a summer vacation I went to) Independence [Grill] Restaurant. From there, I went to Moana Hotel.

MK: How come you decided to go to Moana Hotel which is a Haole-run business, instead of staying with a Japanese business?

JA: But to (be a waiter at the) hotel, it's one thing much better earning. Not only that but much cleaner job with white (uniform), white cloth. And contact all the mostly high-tone people, all travelers. They are not poor people, all rich people.

MK: How did you get the job at Moana Hotel?

JA: Well, they have--employment office was in Downtown, you see. We go over there. We ask if they have anything that we can do. That's where we got a job.

MK: The time that you worked at Moana Hotel, you worked for little over a year?

JA: Yeah, more than one year, yeah.

MK: Who were the other workers at Moana Hotel?

JA: Quite many I know. The captain was Mr. Kimura. He was head-waiter. And many captains. We call Mr. Uyemura, he was the youngest, the captain. And Mr. Nakamura. We had about three or four captains there. With us working there, many, I know. Mr. Matsumura, and Mr. Eguchi, Mr.--oh, quite a number [of] people I know. But many (passed away).

MK: Were all of the Moana waiters Japanese?

JA: Mostly Japanese. We had mostly Japanese. (Some) Filipino came later, but mostly Japanese.

MK: In those days, you mentioned the captains of the waiters at Moana. What were their duties at that . . .

JA: They had to lead the guests as they come in to the table. Not only that. They help the waiters too, sometimes. Sometimes, they take the order when the waiter is (having difficulty). And he give to the waiter (helping hands).

MK: When you worked at Moana, what were your duties as a waiter?

- JA: As a waiter, well, we take order from the guests. We take inside (the order to) the kitchen, and come back. The kitchen, they had to check with the food, what today we get.
- MK: How did you train as a waiter at Moana?
- JA: Well, mostly, those who go in there, they have a couple days or more, they teach you how to do it.
- MK: When you were learning to be a waiter there, how did you feel about the work?
- JA: Not much excited. As long as we know how to do it. Just take the food. Not much hard.
- MK: While you were at Moana, do you remember any of the tourists that came? Were there special tourists that came there?
- JA: Yes. Well, quite a number of people. Mostly there's a tour group. That's quite a busy time, you know. So, if you meet people, if you (are) good, the people (will) ask for you to wait on, see. That's why, that's how you got to serve the people right.
- MK: In those days, what was the pay like at the Moana?
- JA: Was very cheap, though. About twenty-five dollars, monthly. But we made almost the same (amount) the tips. So that way, we getting lots better.
- MK: I notice that at the Moana, you had uniforms to wear.
- JA: That's right, yeah, (clean white uniform).
- MK: What kind of uniforms were you wearing there?
- JA: We wearing white (uniforms).
- MK: Who was responsible for taking care of the uniforms?
- JA: Well, the uniforms, some, they take it home themselves. And (some) at the hotel itself, they have a laundry there. They can do there. [But] you can take home and do it. My wife did it. She used to wash all the (uniforms).
- MK: Then, when you were at the Moana, were you ever living in employee cottages?
- JA: No.
- MK: Okay. Then, I know after you worked at the Moana, you worked at the Royal Hawaiian when it opened. How come you did that?
- JA: Well, that manager over there, they want more experienced waiter to



go with the new one so they can learn. That's why we moved to Royal Hawaiian.

MK: How many of you went to work at the Royal Hawaiian from the Moana?

JA: Not too many. Only about three months only.

MK: What did you think about the Royal Hawaiian when it . . .

JA: Was fine, all right. It's number one hotel in Hawai'i. So it's very high-grade hotel. But I was called by Halekulani, Mrs. [Juliet] Kimball, to work for them. So that's why I quit there. The first thing, the captain was called to Halekulani. And he called me. So, I took over there.

MK: Who was the captain that called you?

JA: Mr. Ukishima. He was a captain at the Moana Hotel. But he said he wanted me to come down. We got about two or three boys who come from the Moana Hotel. He pull 'em out.

MK: When you first started working at the Halekulani, who was in the Kimball family?

JA: Well they had Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Kimball. They had two sons, Mr. George and Mr. Richard. And then, they have Mr. Kimball's sister, Helen. So, that's all the family was there.

MK: Who among the Kimballs managed the hotel? Who worked at the hotel?

JA: Manager? (Mr. Clifford Kimball and assistants.)

MK: Yeah, who took care of the hotel?

JA: Well, that's Mr. [Clifford] Kimball, but they had employees. Like the treasurer, Mr. Crandall. Walter Crandall. He's the treasurer. And we had a Chinese, Mr. Ah Fong, used to be more like taking care of kitchen, buying food and all like that. And then, we had many room boys. Who is doing it and connect with all the tourists in the Mainland is Mr. [Gary] Uchida and Suetsugu, Howard, like that. Quite many.

MK: When you first started working at the Halekulani, what did Halekulani look like?

JA: It's a building, all bungalows, all cottages. The highest is a two-story house. But in 1930, Mr. Kimball built the main building, a three-story building. And even now, when Japanese businessmen bought the place, the main building remain the same.

MK: When you first started working at the Halekulani, what was your job as a waiter?

- JA: Well, at first, when olden days like that, not many waiters, not many pantry boys. So, in the morning, some clean the dining room and some cutting papaya and making orange juices, like that. And then, afternoon, before the lunch, some make salad. And then, make ready for the luncheon. And dinner, same thing. We do the--making salad. And then, all the same. Bread, everything, crackers, everything on the table before we start to work.
- MK: What were the specialities that were served at the Halekūlani in the old days? What kinds of meals were served at Halekūlani in the old days?
- JA: Oh, it's same, ordinary, any hotel served. Every day, it's different menu. That Mr. Ah Fong used to do the order. Change the---he makes the menu.
- MK: What kinds of things would be on the menu?
- JA: Well, quite many, though. It's all different things. The special, Mr. Kimball's speciality is Welsh rarebit. That's Welsh rarebit, that's cheese. And then, Mrs. Kimball's did quite many pickles. Chutney, like that. It's quite different. Halekūlani's chutneys were very famous. Had many other things, but anyway, we have quite delicious food served in there.
- MK: When you were working as a waiter, how were you trained at Halekulani?
- JA: When you come to Halekūlani, all the waiters serve the family, Kimball family. And when they say okay, then they given the station, tables.
- MK: After you've been trained and you've worked on the family table, how many tables were you assigned?
- JA: At least three tables. That means about twelve persons, or guests, for you. But it's more than that. But, you come more smarter or hard worker, you can get more.
- MK: In those days, was there only one captain of the waiters or more?
- JA: In olden days, was only one headwaiter, only. But after the war [World War II], when the captain and the headwaiter passed away, we got one headwaiter and three captains. I was one of the captains.
- MK: Going back to the old days, who were some of the other people who were waiters with you in the old days?
- JA: Well, they're all experienced waiters. Not many now. I don't remember anybody living now. Mostly passed away already.
- MK: How about the kitchen crew? Who worked in the kitchen?

JA: Kitchen crew is mostly Chinese. It's very fun to have a kitchen with Chinese. When we come to kitchen, some kitchen employees, some new from China. They know how to do the cooking. They learn very fast. But the very difficult thing was to tell them order. It's quite hard sometimes. But anyway, we learn little by little, Chinese (words), too. All the waiters have to learn. Say one, two, three, [in Chinese] especially. And then, you have to say lobster and all shrimp like that, you got to tell 'em in Chinese words. And chicken, too. You have to say in Chinese. So, all the waiters catch on right away.

MK: Did the Chinese kitchen crew have to learn any Japanese from the waiters?

JA: Oh, they do, yeah. They would say Japanese, too. They learn, too. Because after working hour between breakfast and luncheon, they have time, too. So, we get together, talk, (in Chinese and in Japanese).

MK: You know, during that free time, I've heard that some Halekūlani waiters used to go fishing.

JA: That's right.

MK: What did you do?

JA: Yes, we did go fishing and swimming and squidding. My record for squid by one hour and a half, only, I caught eleven. That was the highest catch we got. And the biggest fish I caught was eleven pounds. That's a good. . . .

MK: That was all caught right outside . . .

JA: Right outside the beach.

MK: . . . the Halekūlani?

JA: Yeah, Halekūlani.

MK: Since the waiters went squidding and they went swimming, was there locker room facilities, or something?

JA: Oh, yes. Oh, yes, we have. Yes. Some cooks sleep there, too. They have two rooms, like that, they provided (to late workers).

MK: Besides the kitchen crew and the waiters, what other people worked there?

JA: Well, mostly Filipino. Wash dishes, like that, Filipino. Later on, we had Chinese waitress and Filipino waitress. Quite many like that, different race.

MK: When did waitresses get hired?

JA: Well, they do the same way as the men waiters, you know.

MK: In the beginning days, it was men waiters . . .

JA: Mostly men.

MK: When did Halekulani start hiring women to work as waitresses?

JA: Well, the olden days, the room girls, they hire that. And some room boys, too. But they prefer more men than women 'cause they have to carry so many things.

MK: Oh, that's why. In those days, the early days, what was the pay like at Halekulani?

JA: Well, for yardmen and room boys, I don't know exactly how (much) because I don't stay a room boy. But almost the same, though.

MK: So, about twenty-five dollars [a month] . . .

JA: Around there. About twenty-five to thirty dollars, around that. That depend on the room boys. Room boys, they depend on the tips, too.

MK: And the same for waiters, too?

JA: Yeah, yeah.

MK: Those days, from when to when did you work at Halekulani? The hours every day?

JA: We start from seven o'clock to sometimes, nighttime, about nine thirty. Sometimes, come later, ten o'clock. But we have in the morning about one hour and a half rest, and afternoon, about from two o'clock to four thirty. We had two hours and a half between.

MK: What would you do during the time that you're off?

JA: Well, I got my residence was on Kalākaua Avenue by the Kau-Kau Korner. I used to come home, help (my wife). . . . She doing the laundry job, see. Sometimes, I deliver that laundry on a bicycle. Some, they go fishing. Or they just go sleep there. Or (play), Japanese chess, like that.

MK: But you were busy, then?

JA: I was busy, quite busy.

MK: Then, in the early days, did the employees have parties?

JA: We did. Yeah, we did have. New Year party, like that. And then, some people, when they go back to Japan for final thing, like that, we give them a farewell party, like that.

- MK: How about the Halekūlani Kimballs? Did they sponsor parties for you folks?
- JA: Yeah, New Year party, like that, they provided all food and everything.
- MK: Where were the parties held for you? The New Year's parties?
- JA: We used to have some at Japanese teahouse sometimes. But we had quite many times over there. One big house over there by the Ala Wai Boathouse, over there. Inside there, we used to have that.
- MK: I was wondering, during the depression . . .
- JA: Oh, yeah, that was terrible.
- MK: . . . what happened to you at Halekūlani?
- JA: That 1931 to 1933 was the depression all over the place. The employees only work half month with salary. And they ask us to go work someplace else. But those people (did) not work other place. They did more work as a yard boy and carpenter, painter, like that.
- MK: And what did you do?
- JA: I did yard boy, too. But mostly, I came home, help my wife, when I work.
- MK: During World War II, were there any changes?
- JA: Quite many, yes.
- END OF SIDE ONE

## SIDE TWO

- JA: Early part of the World War [II], that's happen on one Sunday, December 7, in the morning. That time, the day before the war started, this Pacific American fleet was training in here. And then, all captains and commanders were in Halekūlani. So, in the morning, about eight o'clock, the wife of one of the captains come inside the dining room. She said, "War started! War started!" Oh, boy, that was really--we couldn't even believe. But later, we saw these people come from Pearl Harbor. One of the captains came back with his car all damaged, too. And then, we know. And then, we saw the airplane right there in the sky. We see that. It was really terrible thing.
- MK: Then, after the war started, did your work at Halekūlani change?
- JA: No, we didn't change. The only thing is, we are alien. We could

not go through on the street after eight o'clock [p.m.]. So, they hired a truck, and then (took us) home. In the morning, same thing. We come. Anyway, after six o'clock, it's okay, then. But to go home, they provided us truck.

MK: During the war years, what kind of people stayed at the Halekulani, though?

JA: Well, mostly these navy captains, all like that. I forgot most of the captains' (names) that came up there. But they were staying at Halekulani. And many reporters from United States. They taking more news from here than Mainland, see. But lot of people brought in the hotel, they get way down.

MK: Because the numbers of people staying there went way down, did the Kimballs still employ the same number of people?

JA: [But] we had quite number of people, they volunteer for the war. And some, they were taken [i.e., drafted]. I show you the picture over there.

MK: Oh, maybe you can show me later, yeah? Okay. So, some were taken to the war and some volunteered, yeah?

JA: Yeah.

MK: Okay. During the war years, because you're Japanese, did you have any problems at Halekulani with the customers?

JA: No, no trouble at all. We had some people---all depend on people, how he get hurt. When he look at us, we (were) afraid of him, to talk to him. But most of the time, it's okay.

MK: By 1940, I think Mr. Richard "Kingie" Kimball took over.

JA: Yeah.

MK: When "Kingie" took over, did anything change?

JA: No, not much changed, same thing. When they sold the hotel to Mr. Norton Clapp, quite different. All captains all dismissed. One person, manager, run the dining room, like that.

MK: But before we talk about the Norton Clapp time, before that when you became a captain in 1946, how did you become the captain?

JA: Well, Mr. Maeoka, who (was the) headwaiter, he chose me. I'm long(-time) waiter there. And then, I speak more English (than) the other waiters. So, that's why they chose me.

MK: Then, as a captain of the waiters, what was your duties?

JA: Well, we lead the guests to the table. At the same time, whenever



(there is) party, we arrange the table, like that. Was captains' work. And we decorate the table with the flowers. That's our job.

MK: And you also served the tables, too, waited on the tables?

JA: No. Captains not serving the people. Of course, we help the waiter when he's busy. We taking the orders just as the Moana Hotel, too. We, captain, take the order before the waiter come back from the kitchen and give to them.

MK: From 1946 until 1959 when Hawai'i became a state, did you notice any change in the tourists that were coming to Halekūlani? Were they different from the tourists that came before the war . . .

JA: No, no. No difference. They're same. See, we have, Halekūlani especially, we have almost the same people come inside. Even after the World War II, many same people.

MK: How about after statehood? After Hawai'i became a state in 1959, were there any change in the tourists that came to stay at Halekūlani?

JA: Yeah, they stay, but anyway, no change at all, though.

MK: Oh, same ones came back?

JA: Same, yeah.

MK: Then, when Norton Clapp took over [in 1962], you said that there were many changes.

JA: Yeah, many changes. Just the employees there, some, not stay there. Besides when the Norton Clapp started, the employees became a union. That's why, it's quite different. Even the people say that not like the olden day Halekūlani. Not like old Halekūlani.

MK: What was different from the olden days Halekūlani?

JA: It's more friendly when we were there. Because we know the same people, same waiters. So, we feel more friendly.

MK: When Norton Clapp took over, it was different?

JA: Different managers. Different, quite different, you see, change. Even kitchen, too, all change.

MK: How did you feel about all these changes?

JA: Well, in my case, when they turn to union, like captain like us, is not supposed to join the strike. But I pity with all (the old-timers,) many years (we) work together. I went to strike, too. So that was my last day there.

MK: Oh, so you stopped working 1964?

JA: [Nineteen] sixty-four. (Yes, after thirty-six years at Halekulani.)

MK: It was because the union came in.

JA: Yeah.

MK: Oh, okay. You know, you worked at Halekulani for so long, what are your feelings about Halekulani?

JA: Well, anyway, it's a nice place to work before. But since we lost Mr. Clifford Kimball and Mrs. Kimball, it's not like before. Quite different. And Mr. "Kingie" is not there. Mr. George not there.

MK: In the old days, you remember the old Waikiki, the hotels that were there then. And now you see the new Waikiki.

JA: Yeah, that's right.

MK: What do you think changed the most in Waikiki?

JA: I compare that with Argentina. That's a big place up there. It's almost the same. The high-rise buildings all around. It's no difference than New York and that big city in Argentina. Not much difference. Same, too, in all Japan, too. All, Yokohama, Kobe, and Tokyo, it's all high-rise. Before, no more like that.

MK: So, I guess, you know, Waikiki has changed a lot, then, yeah?

JA: (People say concrete jungle.)

MK: Anyway, I'll end the interview here then, okay? Thank you very much.

END OF INTERVIEW

# **WAIKĪKĪ, 1900 - 1985: ORAL HISTORIES**

## **Volume I**

**ORAL HISTORY PROJECT  
Social Science Research Institute  
University of Hawai'i-Mānoa**

**June 1985**